

KENNEDY AGAIN TIMID ON CUBA, AREND'S SAYS

Civilian Interference in Defense Charged

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Rep. Leslie G. Arends (R., Ill.), minority whip in the House, charged yesterday that the Kennedy administration was returning to a "timid, meek, and apathetic" attitude in its handling of the Cuban situation.

Arends, who is from Melvin, Ford county, and is senior Republican on the House armed services committee, also accused the administration of "civilian interference" in the national defense program.

"The American people want, above all else, the assurance of adequate national defense, and they are willing to pay for it," Arends told a luncheon meeting of the Illinois State Nurserymen's association in the La Salle hotel.

Initiative Lost

"Particularly explosive situations still exist in both Cuba and Berlin. This country gained world-wide acclaim with the quarantine of Cuba because of the Russian missile buildup. But we lost the initiative which the quarantine gave up when the President retreated from his original demand for on-site inspection of Russian missile bases in Cuba."

Arends said the administration again had adopted a "wait and see" strategy with regard to Cuba, ignoring the wishes of Congress and the people.

He called attention to "the fact that there still are 17,000 Russian troops in Cuba, and a fishing harbor built by the Russians, actually is meant to serve as a naval base."

'Truth Left Untold'

"The people are not being told what the true situation is," he said. "It was the people and the Congress who urged the President to take decisive action with Cuba three months before he did. The people can take it and, collectively, they can work it out."

Arends attacked a decision by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara to abandon a development program for a "reconnaissance-strike" (RS-70) bomber, charging that the move "unconstitutionally usurped the powers of Congress because they impounded \$695,000,000 which Congress had allotted for the manned bomber program."

"Our national defense is getting out of balance when we rely solely on untried missiles," he said. "We cannot risk relying on push-button warfare because it leaves no alternative except world-wide nuclear incineration."

The RS-70 program will be pushed by the armed services committee during the current House term, he said.